

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and discussion presented herein.

1. Allowable subject matter.

The Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that Claims 51 and 55 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 51 and 55 have been left in dependent form, because the enclosed terminal disclaimer obviates the stated rejections of the independent claims.

2. Rejection of Claims 52, 56, and 59 under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Although the Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's conclusions as to the permissibility of the original claim language, the Applicant has amended these claims to expedite prosecution.

3. Double patenting.

Although the Applicant does not agree with the Examiner's assessment with respect to copending application number 11/009,700; U.S. Patent No. 6,716,260; and U.S. Patent No. 6,716,259; the Applicant submits herewith a terminal disclaimer.

4. Amendments Made Without Prejudice or Estoppel.

Notwithstanding the amendments made and accompanying traversing remarks provided above, Applicants have made these amendments in order to expedite allowance of the currently pending subject matter. However, Applicants do not acquiesce in the original ground for rejection with respect to the original form of these claims. These amendments have been made without any prejudice, waiver, or estoppel, and without forfeiture or dedication to the public, with respect to the original subject matter of the claims as originally filed or in their form immediately preceding these amendments. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original scope of these claims in the future, such as through continuation practice, for example.

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5. Conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the various grounds for rejection in the Office Action be reconsidered and withdrawn with respect to the presently amended form of the claims, and that a Notice of Allowance be issued for the present application to pass to issuance.

In the event any further matters remain at issue with respect to the present application, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner please contact the undersigned below at the telephone number indicated in order to discuss such matter prior to the next action on the merits of this application.

Date: December 14, 2007

Respectfully submitted,



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